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MRS. BROOKS'S DREAD OF INFECTION.

JULIA CUNNINGHAME;

OR, THE DAUGHTER AT HOME.

CHAPTER X.—THE TRIALS OF AN ORPHAN GIRL.

"The wild flowers spring amid the grass,

And many a stone appears,

Carved by affection's memory,

Wet with affection's tears."—L. E. L.

No. 255, 1856.

It was June, and visitors were expected at the Grange—a nephew of Mr. Cunningham's, and his young bride. Charles Aubrey was a fine, energetic, warm-hearted young surgeon; he had just taken a tolerably good practice, and prepara-

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tory to entering upon his new duties, he had married an orphan girl. Julia had heard a little of Mary Somerville's history—enough indeed to make her feel great sympathy for her, and to create a strong desire for further acquaintance. Julia was sensible and intelligent, and not at all romantic; but, at the same time, she was simple and girlish, and she looked forward to the approaching visit of the newly married couple with the interest naturally to be expected in a girl of her age, and her eye sparkled with pleasure and anticipation as she gathered a bouquet of lovely exotics to place on the bride's dressing-table.

At the time fixed upon, the young pair arrived, and were affectionately greeted by their country friends.

"Allow me to introduce a new niece, uncle," said Charles Aubrey, as with no little pleasure he presented his young wife to Mr. Cunningham.

"I must claim an uncle's privilege, then," said Mr. Cunningham, kissing the fair cheek of the blushing bride.

Before a week had elapsed, Mary Aubrey and Julia loved each other as sisters. There was so much similarity of sentiment and feeling, and such an agreement of taste and idea, that the same springs seemed to actuate the nature of each individual. To Mary Aubrey, who for several long years had been deprived of all sympathy and affection, it was a sweet and blessed change to find herself, suddenly as it were, surrounded by congenial minds and kindred hearts; and as she wandered with Julia, day after day, through the shady walks of Mr. Cunningham's pleasant garden, talking over past scenes and future prospects, the happy young wife often wept tears of joy as she gratefully acknowledged the mercy which had led her into her present position.

"I have often longed since you came," said Julia to her friend one afternoon, as they sat working in a rustic summer-house—"I have often longed, dear Mary, to know something of your past history; but not," she added, laying her hand on Mary's arm, "not if it would distress you."

"Mine is a very simple history," replied Mary; "it is a history of many joys, and of some long and bitter trials—trials which, at the time, were so heavy and crushing, that I have often wondered lately how I could bear up under them; but it takes a great deal to break a heart—much more than many people imagine—and I have been enabled to endure all, and I am still alive; and what is more, am hopeful and happy. But if you really desire, dear Julia, to hear my recollections of the past, I will relate them at once, though I fear it will prove but a tedious, commonplace recital."

I remember so well the pleasant house in which I was born—the old-fashioned rectory at Burnham, with its antiquated porch and windows, and its bowery garden. I was the only child of my parents; they never had another, and in me they centred all their hopes, and fears, and love. My father was the rector of Burnham; it was but a small living, but there was sufficient to keep us very comfortably, for our manner of life was so simple and unsophisticated, that our wants were few and easily supplied. My father was the mo-

del of a quiet but devoted country clergyman. He loved his parishioners, and they were equally attached to him. He was their friend and benefactor, as well as their spiritual guide, and the lessons which he taught them from the pulpit on Sunday, were in the week exemplified in his own sweet and unblameable life. My mother was his counterpart; she trod in his steps, and assisted him, as far as she could, in all his labours of piety and love.

With such parents and such a home, you may imagine, Julia, how calmly and swiftly the years of my childhood and youth passed away. Until death deprived me of my parents, I can truly say that I knew no real trial. Our house was an abode of peace and love, for it was the abode of real and unfeigned piety. I was educated at home, for my parents never could make up their minds to part with me. My mother was lady-like and accomplished, and she taught me all that I know. My father was a studious man; his mornings were chiefly passed in his study, among his favourite authors; the afternoons he devoted to visiting among his flock, but the evenings he generally spent with my mother and me, reading to us while we sat and worked, or, during the summer months, rambling through the rural lanes and pleasant meadows with which our vicinity abounded. Oh! those happy days, how are they stereotyped upon my memory. But they passed away only too quickly; and then came a change—a dark, terrible change—which left me at once deprived of home, parents, and everything that had made my existence hitherto so desirable and joyous.

Even now, Julia, I shudder to think of the dark, dark week, which saw the illness and death of my parents, and the dreary days which followed—the breaking-up of our once happy home, the tears of our old and faithful servants, and the distress and pity of the simple but affectionate villagers.

We had but few relations, and of these we knew very little, for they lived at a distance; and seldom visited us, while my parents never left their beloved village, unless circumstances absolutely compelled them to do so. The nearest relative we had was a cousin of my father's, an elderly man and a bachelor. On being informed of my desolate situation, he came down from London, and after disposing of the furniture, and settling everything as far as he could, he invited me to return to London with him, and to remain at his house until I had made up my mind as to my future course.

He was a shrewd, calculating man of the world, one to whom I could never look for sympathy. The very sight of his business-like countenance, and its cold, matter-of-fact expression, made me shrink from the idea of becoming dependent upon so uncongenial a character. My father left very little worldly wealth behind him, not nearly sufficient for my maintenance, and I was therefore compelled, when the first excess of grief was over, to come to some conclusion respecting the means of obtaining a livelihood.

The most feasible plan which presented itself was to undertake the situation of governess in a school or family. When I mentioned it to my cousin Mr. Austin, he at once fell in with my

proposal, and promised to inquire for a suitable situation among his friends and acquaintance. I had some doubts that his ideas of a suitable situation would not altogether coincide with my own, but I had no power to help myself; I was a total stranger to London, and should have been utterly at a loss how to proceed, had I been left to my own resources. I was therefore obliged to leave the matter entirely with Mr. Austin, and trust to his capability and judgment. In a few days he informed me that he had succeeded in finding a situation which seemed very likely to suit. "In fact," he said, "I have already called upon the lady, and described, as well as I was able, your attainments and qualifications, and she is so far satisfied that she wishes to see you herself. You had better, therefore, call upon her at once; I am going that way myself this afternoon, and will accompany you as far as I can, and put you in the right direction."

I ventured to ask the number of children I should be required to teach. "I did not inquire," said Mr. Austin, hastily; "any particulars of that kind you can enter into when you see Mrs. Brooks yourself. She said, I remember, that her children were young, which will be all the better, as this is your first situation."

It was with a heavy heart that I went up-stairs after dinner to put on my things, preparatory to presenting myself as a candidate for Mrs. Brooks's vacant situation. I never looked into the glass, and surveyed my deep mourning dress and dejected countenance without feeling the bitter truth more forcibly than ever, that I was an orphan and desolate. How did my heart sink as I walked with Mr. Austin through the crowded streets, and felt that the hard, calculating man of business by my side was the only person in the world to whom I could look for protection or counsel. At the end of half a mile, after laconically directing me to my destination, he left me to proceed alone. After a quarter of an hour's walk, I reached the street to which he had directed me, and soon found the house. It was some time before I could summon courage to mount the flight of stone steps, and lift the ponderous brass knocker. I saw the passers-by look at me, as I lingered near the door, some with careless indifference, some with curiosity, and a few—a very few—with compassion, inspired probably by my extreme youth, my sad face, and sable garments. How I wished that Mr. Austin had not left me to go alone; he might, I thought, at least have introduced me to Mrs. Brooks, and that would in some degree have abated the formidable character of the interview; but he was utterly incapable of entering into the fears and perplexities of a timid young girl, who, sheltered from infancy beneath the protecting wing of fond and watchful parents, had been carefully shielded from everything likely to annoy or distress.

At last, necessity made me desperate, and hastily running up the steps, I tremblingly raised the heavy knocker, and gave a faint, uncertain rap. A snivelling footman opened the door, and, after looking at me from head to foot, and listening to my inquiry for Mrs. Brooks, showed me into a large and handsome drawing-room. It was fully half an hour before Mrs. Brooks made her appearance, and I had sufficient time to take a

deliberate survey of the apartment in which I was seated. No expense seemed to have been spared in the furniture and decorations, but to my eye there was a want of harmony and taste in the arrangements and general aspect.

In the midst of my observations Mrs. Brooks entered, and with a palpitating heart I rose from my chair.

"Pray be seated," she said, in a condescending tone. "Your name is Somerville, I suppose—the young person Mr. Austin called about? You are seeking a situation for the first time, I believe?"

I bowed assent, for I could not speak, and she proceeded: "Of course, you are qualified to undertake a situation? What do you profess to teach?"

Strange to say, I hardly knew how to answer this question, simple as it was. A thorough-bred governess would have been at no loss for a reply; she would at once have stated her capabilities and acquirements in the way best calculated to place them in a favourable point of view; but everything was new to me, and I felt awkward and confounded. Mrs. Brooks, however, was waiting for my answer, and I was obliged to say something. I therefore, in a faltering voice, stated as well as I was able, the various branches of learning to which I had hitherto given my attention.

"Very well," she replied; "but are you able to give instruction in music and French? because a thorough knowledge of these is quite indispensable."

Yes, I believed I could conscientiously reply in the affirmative. I had also paid considerable attention to drawing, and my father had instructed me in Latin. A pang shot through my heart as I uttered the name of my departed parent, but that was no time to indulge in sorrow. Mrs. Brooks sat opposite to me, intently scanning every look and action, and, with a violent effort I restrained my feelings and maintained my composure.

"You are young," she said, after a pause, during which she had been apparently weighing the circumstances of the case—"very young: of course you will not look for a very high salary, especially as this is your first *début* as a governess. What remuneration do you expect?" This was another question that I was not prepared to answer, and I therefore referred it to Mrs. Brooks herself. She named a sum, beyond which she should not think of engaging so young a person. I was very ignorant of such matters; if I could only have secured a comfortable home, salary would have been but a secondary consideration. I therefore assented to her proposal; and, after a few more observations, she said: "Supposing I close with you, how soon can you be with me? I am without a governess now, and shall be glad of your services at once. Can you come to me on Friday?" This was short notice, only leaving me two days to complete my preparations; but I had no home to leave, no beloved friends to part from, and I greatly preferred the prospect of maintaining myself to the thought of being dependent upon Mr. Austin; and, accordingly, I expressed my willingness to be with her at any time she thought proper to appoint.

"Very well," she said. "Then the matter is settled, and I shall expect you on Friday."

I thought this a proper interval to inquire about the age and the number of my future pupils. "My children are all young," she replied. "You will have four under your care, the eldest of whom is a girl of ten. Our only boy is a cripple, and constantly confined to his couch; he learns a little, however, when his health permits. One thing I ought to mention is, that he will sleep in your room; he often needs attention in the night, and nurse, having the younger children with her, is unable to take charge of him."

I rather shrunk from this arrangement at the time, though I showed no outward signs of dissatisfaction. I did not then know what a comfort that poor little cripple would prove to me, nor what delight I should find in ministering to his wants and soothing his sufferings. As I rose to depart, a loud knock at the door announced a visitor, and in another moment the footman ushered an elderly gentleman into the room.

"Dr. Warburton," exclaimed Mrs. Brooks, extending her hand; "you are come to see Evan." A warm feeling of admiration took possession of my mind as I looked for a moment upon the fine, benevolent countenance of the gentlemanly stranger. His calm, penetrating eye was fixed upon my face with such an unmistakable expression of kindness and sympathy, that it directly found its way to my heart, and I longed to express my gratitude; but the next moment I was bowed out of the room by Mrs. Brooks, and the footman having opened the door for me, I was soon on my way back to Mr. Austin's.

When I returned, my cousin was sitting at tea. He looked pleased when I told him that Mrs. Brooks had actually engaged me, and asked what salary she gave. "Humph!" he said, when I mentioned the sum, "little enough; but, however, there are so many applicants for every vacant situation, that you may consider yourself extremely fortunate to have secured what you have. When do you go?" I told him on Friday. "Humph!" he said again, "short notice; but the sooner you begin the better. You must try and keep up your spirits. Parents don't like long faces about their children."

Oh! what would I not have given at that moment for one kind look, one word of sympathy and encouragement. But Mr. Austin possessed little of "the milk of human kindness." Long intercourse with a selfish world, and an eager pursuit after riches, had choked up every benevolent feeling, and the sorrows of an orphan girl were to him nothing better than sentiment and romance.

On the appointed day he hired a cab, and having seen both my luggage and myself safely deposited within it, he nodded his head, and we drove off. The same conceited-looking footman that I had seen before, handed me out of the cab, and carried my luggage into the hall, and after I had paid and dismissed the cabman, I walked into the house, and the ponderous door was closed.

Here I was, then, in my new home, with a heart full of grief, doubt, and anxiety; but I had not much time for thought, for Mrs. Brooks appeared at the end of a long passage, followed by a female servant, whom (after slightly noticing me)

she directed to show me into my bed-room. It was a dull room, at the back of the house, and looked into a dingy yard; there was a large four-post bedstead, intended for me, and a smaller one for the little cripple. The maid who attended me was an honest, pleasant-looking young woman, and I afterwards found that she acted as school-room maid. She showed me the door of the school-room, which was nearly opposite my bed-room, and then left me alone.

When I had taken off my things, I went to the room which she had pointed out, and found my four pupils sitting there alone. The two eldest were girls; both resembled their mother, and greeted me, when I spoke to them, with a mixture of hauteur and condescension. They were evidently accustomed to look upon their governess as very inferior to themselves. The poor little cripple lay helplessly upon his couch, and presented that most touching and melancholy spectacle—a sick and suffering child. My heart clung to him at once, and I felt that I could love him and find a sweet pleasure in ministering to his wants. My youngest pupil was a pretty simple child of five; she had not yet learned to assume any airs of haughtiness and superiority, and when I stooped to kiss her, the mild blue eyes shone back an artless welcome, and the small rosy mouth warmly returned my greeting. Dear little Grace! she had one of those sweet, loving dispositions that can never become wholly chilled and estranged, even by constant intercourse with fashionable society.

The two eldest girls soon left me to join their mamma, who sent for them into the drawing-room, and I remained alone with my younger pupils. Poor little Evan's large dark eyes looked wistfully at my countenance, as if to discover whether or not he might expect to find a friend in his new governess. I went and sat down by his couch, and, coaxing little Grace to sit on my lap, tried to amuse the two children by telling them all the little tales that I could remember of country life and rural scenes. To the two little Londoners, whose walks had been chiefly confined to the parks and squares of the metropolis, stories of violets and primroses, frisking lambs and broods of young chickens, possessed peculiar charms. But these reminiscences so forcibly reminded me of my past life, and were so indissolubly connected with my beloved parents, that my feelings overcame me, and I was obliged to stop short.

"What's the matter?" said little Grace, looking up into my face; and, seeing my tears, she added, "Poor Miss Somerville! you're sorry to leave home, ain't you?"

The mention of home made my tears flow faster, and poor little Evan, whose spirits were weak and his feelings easily excited, began to cry too. Just then Mrs. Brooks came into the room, and soon discovered our melancholy faces. She looked displeased, and said shortly, "I wish to speak to you, Miss Somerville."

I followed her out of the school-room, and when we were alone she said, in a cold and I thought severe tone, "I must caution you, Miss Somerville, never to give way to low spirits before Evan. His health, as you must perceive, is very precarious, and his feelings extremely sensitive, and the least excitement tells unfavourably upon him;

indeed," she added, I should not like any of my children to be in the constant company of a gloomy person. You must try to restrain your feelings; what is past cannot be recalled. You are no longer a child, and at your age one must expect to lose parents. Your case is not an uncommon one. Your wisest course will be to banish as much as possible all useless grieving over the past, and to give your mind energetically to the duties you have just undertaken."

With these words she left me, and I returned to my little pupils. Oh! Julia, you can hardly imagine the terrible weight on my heart as I sat down again, and for the next three hours, by a tremendous effort, succeeded in maintaining a calm and composed countenance. What it cost me, I cannot describe; for while my very soul was writhing in agony, I dared not show any outward signs of the grief within. But I must not dwell too long upon particulars; for I have still much to relate. I think, however, that what I have said will lead you to the conclusion that I met with very little sympathy or kindness from Mrs. Brooks. The fact is, she was a woman of rather low origin, but clever and shrewd, and, having made the best of her limited means of education, she passed among the generality of her acquaintance for a very superior woman. She possessed a great deal of what is called tact, and having married a rich and prosperous merchant, she had stepped into a sphere far above that in which she was born.

As is the case with most persons who have suddenly risen to rank and affluence, she placed undue importance upon riches and display, and was very haughty in her behaviour to those whom she considered her inferiors in worldly wealth. As a dependent upon her favour, she invariably treated me with coldness and indifference, and seemed determined to make me feel that she considered me as little better than a servant. When in her presence, I was under constant restraint—afraid to speak, lest I should give offence; afraid to be silent, lest I should be considered sulky and gloomy. My three years in Mrs. Brooks's family were a season of bondage and endurance; and but for two or three ameliorating circumstances, I think I could never have endured the continual consciousness of isolation and loneliness.

I saw very little of Mr. Brooks; he came into the school-room sometimes to see little Evan, but rarely took any notice of me. He was always immersed in business, and left the management of his house and family entirely to his wife. And now I must mention the few bright spots which occasionally enlivened my cheerless and monotonous life.

From being constantly under my care, both by night and day, poor little Evan soon became deeply attached to me, and could hardly bear me to leave him even for a few minutes. His poor emaciated body grew weaker and weaker, for his case was quite hopeless; but his mind expanded rapidly, and his large eyes, which disease had rendered unnaturally brilliant, seemed to express the intelligence and thought of maturity. I felt that he could not live long; and my one great desire was to lead the poor little sufferer to Jesus, and to know that he was safe within the ark of his love. His mind was like soil—ready prepared for the

seed of eternal life. He received the message of mercy simply, thankfully, and undoubtedly, without any questioning, any cavilling, but in faith and love. His nights were often restless and wakeful, and I frequently watched beside him for more than an hour, repeating his favourite hymns and the short texts that he knew and loved. Oh! those were blessed seasons. We seemed to get nearer to heaven. Sometimes I used to fancy that my parents must be near me, and watching over us both.

During the latter part of little Evan's illness, Dr. Warburton visited him every day. Oh! Julia, words cannot tell you the comfort and delight which those visits were to the poor friendless orphan. He possessed that noble philanthropy which can never behold suffering and sorrow without a deep, earnest desire to comfort and relieve them. The dying cripple and the despised young governess both had a claim upon his tenderness and compassion. The very sight of his fine, benevolent face, and the kind pressure of his fatherly hand, seemed to send a ray of warm sunshine into my heart. I felt that he knew my sorrows—that he was perfectly acquainted with my real situation, though not a word passed between us but what related to his little patient or to some trifling occurrence. Once, indeed, he said, as he shook my hand at parting, "You must be a good deal confined with that poor little child. Cannot you come and take tea with my sister some afternoon? she would be so glad to see you." I knew that this was impossible—Mrs. Brooks would never have suffered it; but oh! how my heart thanked him for his kindness; how the sweet sympathy, conveyed in those few simple words, fell like balm upon my desolate heart! I never forgot them—I lived upon them for a whole year—they were always recurring to my recollection, like the sweet strains of a beautiful melody.

It was spring when poor little Evan died. He passed away very quietly, apparently worn out with suffering. Ah! how I missed the poor little fellow. I used to wake in the night fancying I heard his weak voice asking me to come to him. He had wound himself very closely round my heart; how closely I did not know until he was taken. At his death, I was deprived of good old Dr. Warburton's visits, and I felt more desolate than before; but little Grace was still the same sweet loving little creature as ever, and she was now left very much alone with me, her sisters being much older than herself, and frequently going out with their mamma, or sitting with her in the drawing-room. Except during the hours of study, they were seldom in the school-room; and for this I was not sorry, for they so much resembled their mother in pride and coldness, that I could not feel any pleasure in their society.

Soon after little Evan's death, I felt a change in my own health. Though not robust, I had never been sickly; but now I felt a languor and depression which surprised me. I took some simple remedies, but they did not relieve me. I grew worse rather than better, and at last became really ill. Anxiety of mind increased my sufferings. Should I be laid aside for any length of time, what was to become of me? Mr. Austin had left England, and was gone to the continent, intending to

pass some months there, so that I was literally without a friend or guardian of any kind. I knew Mrs. Brooks too well to imagine for a moment that I could trust with any confidence in her kindness and compassion. Nothing irritated her more than illness or even a temporary indisposition in any of the servants. "They must go somewhere else to be nursed," she used to say; "I cannot have any one laid up here to be attended and waited upon." The prospect before me was a very gloomy one; I felt that I needed medical advice, but I dreaded a heavy doctor's bill, which I knew must inevitably be paid out of my slender allowance.

One morning I rose and dressed at my usual hour; I hardly know how, for I could scarcely stand, and trembled from head to foot. "How ill you look, Miss Somerville," said Margaret the housemaid, who was setting out the breakfast things when I went into the school-room. Margaret was a kind creature; she had always, from the first moment I entered the house, treated me with attention and respect, and had performed many a good office for me, which, though trifling in itself, had neither been overlooked nor forgotten. She was full of concern when she noticed my wretched looks. "You ought to be in bed, Miss Somerville; I'm sure you ought. You're not fit to be up. I shouldn't wonder, now, if you're sickening for something; do let me go and tell the Misses."

I offered no objection to Margaret's proposal, for I thought it very likely that she might be correct in her supposition; and if such really were the case, I knew that I ought not to remain with the children. In a few moments Mrs. Brooks entered the room, looking irritated and displeased.

"What is the matter, Miss Somerville?" she asked in a hasty tone.

"I feel very ill this morning," I replied, in a low voice, for I could hardly speak.

"Miss Somerville hasn't been well for a long time past," said Margaret, who had followed her mistress, and was anxiously looking at me.

"Indeed! then you had better see a doctor at once. Who is your medical man?"

"I have never needed one before," I replied, "since I came to London; if you have no objection, I should prefer Dr. Warburton to any one else."

"Oh, certainly, I can have no objection whatever; you are at liberty to call in whoever you please. Margaret, tell Morgan to call at Dr. Warburton's, and ask him to come here at once."

"Had I not better remain in my own room?" I asked, as Mrs. Brooks turned to go away, "at least until I have seen the doctor; it may prove to be something infectious."

"Good gracious! I hope not," exclaimed Mrs. Brooks, in alarm, holding her pocket handkerchief to her mouth, and retreating several paces; "pray, have you any reason to think that it is so?"

"None," I replied, "except that I feel very ill, and it appears right to be cautious."

"Of course, of course," she answered quickly. "Dear me, I hope it is no fever of any kind. I have such a dread of fevers."

I heard no more. I had borne up as long as I could, and this unpleasant interview with Mrs. Brooks, combined with my bodily sufferings, was too much for nature to endure. I fainted away, and

was insensible for some time, as I afterwards heard. When I revived, I found myself in bed, with Margaret on one side, holding me in her arms, and Dr. Warburton on the other. Ill as I was, I could not help smiling when I saw his kind and benignant countenance. I felt an instant conviction, I hardly know why, that I should be taken care of.

"Poor child!" he said compassionately, when I opened my eyes, "she'll be better now; drink this, my dear, it will help to restore you," and he held a wine-glass to my lips. "Now try and tell me how you feel. There, don't be in a hurry; take your time."

When I had finished describing my symptoms, and had answered the few questions he put to me, he inquired for Mrs. Brooks. She was standing on the landing, though she would not venture into the room in which I lay.

"What is your opinion, Doctor?" she abruptly inquired; "do you apprehend anything infectious?"

"At present I cannot give any decided opinion," he replied; "Miss Somerville is ill, seriously ill; some symptoms resemble typhus fever."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mrs. Brooks, in an excited tone; "she must be removed, instantly removed; I cannot suffer her to remain here."

"And where, Madam, can she go?" asked Dr. Warburton, in a calm voice. "I understand that she is an orphan, and that the only protector she has is now on the continent."

"I cannot help that," answered Mrs. Brooks. "Miss Somerville has no claim upon me; there are plenty of hospitals in London where she would be well attended to, and have the best advice."

"Did I hear you right, Mrs. Brooks?" exclaimed the Doctor, in the same calm unmoved tone, but with considerable severity; "did I hear you right? Do you mean to say that this poor desolate orphan, so young, so unprotected, has no claim upon you—and you a mother, with several young daughters, Madam?" and, oh, I could imagine the fire of his expressive eye as he said this, for I overheard all as I lay in bed.

"Madam, since you are unable to acknowledge the claim of weakness and suffering, I myself will gladly and thankfully claim the privilege of becoming the friend and protector of this friendless young orphan. She shall not remain to trouble and annoy you;" and he laid a strong emphasis on the words. "In a quarter of an hour, I shall return with a carriage, in which she can be comfortably and easily conveyed to my house; and there, for the present at least, she shall remain. My sister will esteem it a delight to watch over her. For the present, then, Madam, I will say Good morning."

How Mrs. Brooks bore this address I cannot say. I heard no answer. Probably she was too thankful at so easily getting rid of a troublesome inmate to express either displeasure or irritation. Perhaps she felt mortified and ashamed at the Doctor's honest but powerful reproof. Whatever the case might be, I saw her no more; and, in a few minutes, wrapped in blankets, and supported by pillows, and with the kind and generous doctor sitting by my side, I was on my way to a new abode.

I think I must have fainted again; for I remember nothing more, until I found myself again

in bed, in a strange room, and with the sweet placid countenance of an elderly lady bending over me. "Dear child," she said, in a soft voice, "do not fear, you are among friends; don't trouble your poor head about anything," she added, seeing me about to speak; and I *did* not, for I felt that I had found a home.

GOUGAUNE BARRA:

AN IRISH JOTTING.

RAILWAY extension and the improvements in steam navigation have lately done much towards making the beauties of Ireland known to her insular neighbours. The Cork Exhibition attracted crowds to the south, who, after exploring the charming scenery which abounds in the ancient domains of the Milesian land of Desmond, did not return to their several homes without having travelled north and east and west. In the latter direction, the county of Cork possesses attractive and hitherto almost untrodden haunts. Killarney is renowned throughout the world; its mountains, lakes, and valleys are classic ground; but who speaks of the grand Thermopylae-like pass of Kaim-an-eagh? or of lone and lovely Gougane Barra? Perhaps they owe a portion of their charms to the untouched and virgin-like seclusion in which they have hitherto reposed.

I once sojourned for some weeks in the wild district that extends between the lakes of Inchigulagh and the Kerry mountains, and found much that was curious and interesting amongst its half-wild aborigines. The old Milesian race exists there in unmixed purity of descent; it needs no ethnographer to convince us of the Spanish (and thence the Phœnician) origin of the early inhabitants of Ireland. The olive complexion, the oval face, the deep flashing black eye, the wild dark locks, are constantly to be seen in the region I have mentioned. Any one witnessing the breaking up of the national school might fancy that half its young students, with their rags, their sunburnt features, and their dazzling eyes and teeth, had stepped down from the canvas of Murillo, so thoroughly Spanish are they. Indeed, Iverah—in Irish, Ivera (the name of a neighbouring barony)—is thought to be derived from the Iberi, a Spanish colony who settled here.

Near the district of Gougane Barra rises the wild hill of Lackabaun, which forms part of the boundary line between Cork and Kerry. The people have a legend that when St. Patrick came to evangelize the district, he made a pleasant and successful progress, expelling on his way every venomous reptile, until he reached the top of Lackabaun, where he stopped, giving his blessing to the western district. A small species of harmless toad exists amongst the bogs, whose presence there, according to the peasants, is fully accounted for by St. Patrick's foot never having actually trodden on the soil. It is certainly the only instance of that, or indeed of any other kind of reptile being found in Ireland, frogs and a very minute green lizard excepted; but they are, as every one knows, perfectly harmless. The following description of Gougane Barra is abridged from one, given by a native of Cork, who possessed a

painter's eye and a poet's lip, both, alas! now lying cold in death.

The lake of Gougane Barra—that is, "the hollow or recess of St. Finn Barr," in the rugged territory of Ibh-Leoghaire (the O'Leary's country) in the west of the county of Cork—is the parent of the river Lee. It is of an irregular, oblong form, and may cover about twenty acres of ground. Its waters embrace a small but verdant island, of about half an acre in extent, which approaches its eastern shore. The lake is situate in a deep hollow, surrounded on every side (save the east, where its superabundant waters are discharged) by vast and almost perpendicular mountains. Between their bases and the margin of the lake runs a narrow strip of land, which at the north-east affords a few patches for coarse meadow and tillage.

As we approached the causeway leading to the island, we passed a small slated fishing-lodge. Beside it lay a skiff, hauled up on the strand; and at a small distance, on a little green eminence, a few lowly mounds, without stone or inscription, point out the simple burying-place of the district. Their number, and the small extent of ground covered, give at a glance the census and the condition of a thinly-peopled mountain country; and yet this unpretending spot is as effectually the burial-place of human hopes and feelings and passions—of feverish anxieties, of sorrows and agitations, and affords as saddening a field for contemplation, as if it covered the space and was decked out with all the cypresses, the willows, and the marbles of Père-la-Chaise. A rude artificial causeway led us into the island. At the entrance stands a square, narrow stone inclosure, flagged overhead. This incloses a portion of the water of the lake, which finds admission beneath. This well is constantly frequented by sick men, women, children, and cows. The lame, the blind, the sick and sore, the barren and unprofitable, the stout *boccough* of either gender, repair to its healing water, in the sure hope of *not* getting rid of those lamentable infirmities which form their best source of profit, by interesting the charity of the peasantry.

The greater portion of the island is covered by the ruins of a small chapel, with its appurtenant cloisters, and a large square court, containing eight cells arched over. In the middle of the court, on a little mound, with an ascent at each side of four stone steps, stood (but it has now fallen down) the shattered and time-worn shaft of a wooden cross. A number of hair and hay tethers, halters, and spangle are hung on the surrounding trees as votive offerings, to commemorate the supposed benefits conferred on ailing cows by being bathed in the waters of the lake.

The superstitious ceremony usually observed is this:—If a cow gets sick, refuses food, and begins to lose her milk, she is said to be "fairly-struck;" and her owner, in order to counteract the malign influence, drives her to the holy isle of Gougane Barra, and milks a few drops from her udder into a wooden porringer; the animal is then urged into the water, and forced to swim across to the opposite side. Her owner "gives his rounds"—that is, goes on his bare knees—"the pinnacle of his knees," as a man once expressed it to me, from cell to cell, saying prayers, at the rate of one

Paternoster to eight Ave Marias, until the full tale of "vain repetitions" is completed. To insure that neither the devotions nor the devotee should be cheated, by giving either too few or too many prayers, the pilgrim (and these rounds are often gone through for human as well as vaccine infirmities) procures a stick, and cuts on it a notch for each prayer repeated. These sticks are afterwards left on the island, and I have picked up numbers of them. Sometimes, in case of an undoubted (?) cure being perfected through the miraculous agency of the holy well, a rosary or some tattered garment is hung up as a memorial and a thank-offering. The wooden milk-piggins, after being left floating on the lake, are washed ashore in great numbers, bearing mournful witness to the superstitious credulity of an otherwise intelligent people.

During late years the inhabitants of this wild region had endured sufferings which a native of happy England would find it hard to picture to himself. Living on potatoes, not merely as the staple, but as the sole article of food, when the time of failure—"the black years," as they are emphatically called—came, utter destitution was the inevitable result. I remember a petition addressed by one poor man to the Inchigulah Relief Committee. It was well written and well spelled, and stated, "that your petitioner humbly sheweth that he has no means of subsistence whatever, except air and water." A true description of the state of many thousands beside!

During the height of the famine, a poor family of "squatters" came from a neighbouring parish to take up their abode amid the rocky wilds of Gougaune Barra. They had literally *nothing* wherewith to commence the world, save the scanty daily dole of Indian meal, which was all that, in justice to others, the Relief Committee could give. This, one of them had to walk several miles each day to receive; and, after all, it scarcely sufficed to "keep life together." The family consisted of a mother, (the father, "the provider," as the poor people say, was dead) and several children of various ages. They commenced, with no implements but their hands, and an old spade and sickle, to build a house. Choosing a hollow in a rock, they piled up side walls of loose stones, and managed to roof the fabric with sods and rushes. There was something touching in the sight of the famished-looking, eager group, working without intermission at the construction of their most primitive abode.

One day some rich English tourists were passing by on their way to the lake. They stopped to look at what they could not believe to be intended for a human habitation. They called one of the boys, a fine intelligent half-naked fellow, and soon elicited from him an account, eloquent in its truthful simplicity, of his family's story. His mammy, he said, "was a lone widdy ever since daddy took the fever and died. She had to give up the little place, and the praty garden that was all black, and travel on the wide world. But we'll soon have a nice little cabin here," continued the boy hopefully; "and if wanst I and the other girls could get work to do about the fields, we'd airn the bit and sup for mammy and the weeshy ones."

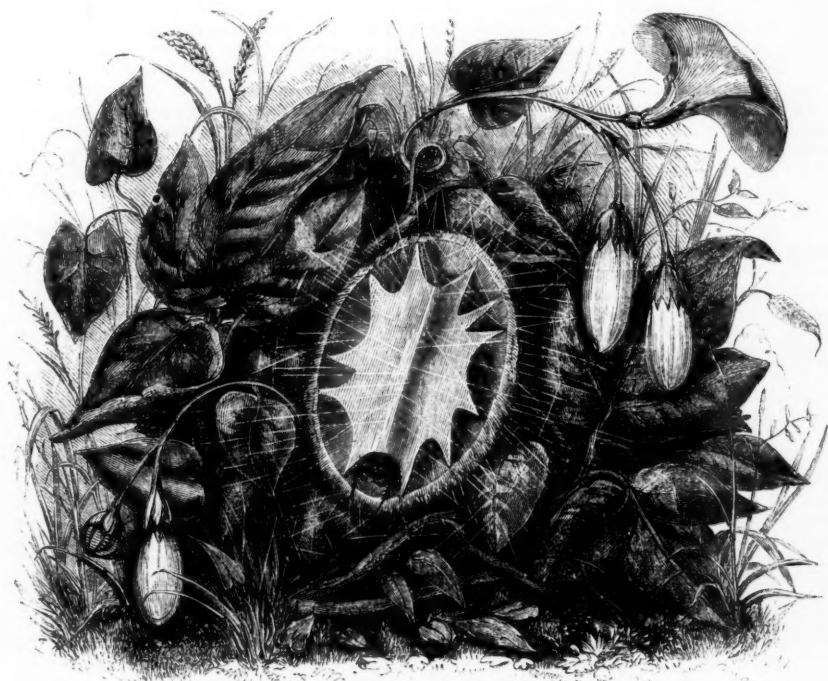
One of the gentlemen called him, put something into his hand, and saying, "There's something,

my boy, to help to finish the house," passed on. It was a crumpled bit of paper, very different from the "white sixpence," which would have more than fulfilled the boy's wildest hopes; and, with a feeling of deep disappointment, he carried it in to his mother.

She looked at it with a sort of vague ecstacy. She had seen papers like it at Macroom fair. Could it be—was it a pound note? It was indeed. "The kind good English gentleman had made her a rich woman that day." Then the wondering joy of the children, when they heard that that dirty bit of paper was worth forty white sixpences, twenty white shillings! Little did the good-natured donor imagine what unbounded wealth and happiness he had conferred. The house was finished "in style," a "bonneau" (little pig) purchased; hens and ducks, a dog and cat soon enlivened the somewhat dirty *entourage* of the dwelling, and the poor family (certainly after an Irish and untidy fashion) were prospering and likely to prosper when I last heard of them.

In a hermitage on the lonely isle of Gougaune lived in the 6th century St. Finn Barr. He was the founder of the cathedral in Cork, which is named after him, and appears to have been in reality a holy and devoted man, labouring as a true successor to St. Patrick, when, according to the testimony of even Roman Catholic historians, the pope had no rule or domination in Ireland. The people, however, speak of him as one of their own saints, and tell many curious legends respecting him. A very intelligent and well-educated farmer, a man of substance, who wore boots, and could read and write, told me one day that no fox was ever seen in the island of Gougaune, or could live there for an hour if he ventured in. Now foxes abound in the neighbouring mountain, and I asked with surprise to what this peculiarity was owing. "I'll tell you, Ma'am. In the good old times, when St. Finn Barr lived on Gougaune island, all the country people about used to bring him ducks and chickens and eggs for presents, as he had not much else to live upon. Well! he used to have them running about alive upon the island, and only killed them as he wanted them to eat. But after a time he found that some one or something was saving him the trouble; for every morning he used to find several of his finest birds gone, and their blood and feathers scattered about. Now he was as quiet and peaceable a man as you'd meet in a day's walk; but still he thought it well to stand up for his rights, and so one fine night he says: 'I lay my ban on whatever it is that steals my poultry; and be it man, woman, child, beast, or fish, may it never leave the place alive.' After that he went to his bed, cool and comfortable; and lo! and behold you, next morning there was a great big thing of a fox lying dead at the edge of the lake. And from that hour no fox can live there. I knew it to be true," my informant continued. "Dr. B. once had a fine bag-fox driven into the island, and fastened there one night, so that he could not get away; and next morning the fox was lying stretched as dead as a salmon!"

The man, although, as I have said, intelligent and well-informed for his rank in life, firmly believed this legend, and could not by any argument of mine be shaken in his faith. My own idea is,



NEST OF THE LABYRINTHINE SPIDER.

that the animal had either strangled itself in vain attempts to break from its chain, or had been killed by some devout neighbour, who did not wish to have the truth of the legend impugned.

Of late years, owing to the kind and active endeavours of some individuals in the neighbourhood, and the establishment of schools, the people are much advanced in civilization, although their numbers have been fearfully diminished by sickness, famine, and emigration. I have often thought, if the wild and lovely region I have attempted to describe were situated in England, what an earthly paradise it would have been made.

Brighter times than any that have gone before are, I trust, reserved for Ireland. The purchases made under the Encumbered Estates commission, by rich English and Scottish capitalists, will bring much wealth into the country, together with, in many instances, an accession of active benevolence, to encourage well-directed labour, and induce amongst the peasantry, what they so much need, habits of patient industry.

In many of the Union workhouses an admirable system of reproductive self-supporting labour has been established. Not only, as regards the able-bodied pauper, is the apostolic maxim, "If any man will not work neither let him eat," carried

out, but the people are taught how to work, and many a boy and girl, who would otherwise have grown up idle pests to society, now leave the Union "capacious and collified," as a man once expressed it, to earn an honest livelihood by various handicraft trades.

SPIDERS.

OF "four things which are little upon the earth," but which "are exceeding wise," one is mentioned by the writer of the book of Proverbs, as the spider. "The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

The wisdom of the spider is displayed in the skilfulness with which she works, the beauty and fitness of the tissue she fabricates, and the localities she selects wherein to spread her toils, or construct her domicile. Silk is the material with which she works, and this is the product of a peculiar apparatus on the under part of the body of the spider, whence it is drawn forth in compound threads of extreme minuteness, to be arranged according to the plan taught by instinct. In this operation the spider uses her "hands," or claws, with surprising address and precision: she draws

out the threads, she fastens them while yet in a viscid state at the proper places of junction, and she coils up useless or superfluous threads into little balls and throws them away. Who has not watched a spider drop, as it were, along a line attached to some object above, and re-ascend the line with great rapidity when alarmed? But few who have watched this manœuvre are aware that as the spider ascends, she keeps rolling up the line into a ball, which she lets fall when she has regained her retreat. "She taketh hold with her hands."

With what ease and security a spider runs along a line—a line often so fine as scarcely to be seen by the naked eye, and carried out to the distance of several yards from one object to another, so as to form a single-thread suspension bridge. When we traverse a garden path on a fine autumnal morning, we cannot help breaking through hundreds of these lines of suspension, which have been projected during the course of the night by the elegant Garden Diadem Spider (*Epeira diadema*), whose well-shaped net, consisting of radii, or spokes, from a centre, crossed by numerous threads disposed in regular circles, may be seen on every bush.

In the construction of this net, which is placed vertically, or nearly so, the spider first proceeds to form the cords of suspension. In order to effect this, she throws out certain scaffold lines, which, carried by the air, as some think, but as we ourselves, from a series of experiments* which we have carefully conducted, believe, projected with aim and purpose at a definite object, become attached at their distant ends; along these lines she travels, in order to strengthen them, doubling and redoubling the threads. She strains them and shakes them—such is her instinctive wisdom—and even drops down from them, swinging about so as to test their security to the utmost of her power. She gives them double attachments when needed, and connects them at different points, so as to enable them to bear the strain of the net, when agitated by the breeze; for these lines are to serve as its cordage of support.

This part of the work being finished, the spokes or radii are formed, or at least a certain number of them; and after these the concentric circles, beginning at the centre. In all this, the nicest manipulation is required, and what, in speaking of a reasoning being, we should call much judgment. Other spiders display equal ingenuity. We give a copy from nature of the web of the labyrinthic spider (*Agelena labyrinthica*), which in some districts is abundant in autumn. This beautiful structure is placed amidst the herbage of hedge-row banks, in furze bushes, or tufts of grass; it consists of an outer case or tent, with an opening, varying in shape, angular or oval, within which is seen a sort of bundle suspended by numerous threads, and secured by others crossing it in various directions. Behind this suspended body the tent proceeds downwards, in a somewhat funnel-shaped manner, to a recess in which the spider usually takes up its abode; when, however, the structure is disturbed,

as it was when we took our sketch, by the removal of leaves and stalks which obstructed our view, the spider comes forth, and peers out under the suspended bundle, just at the edge of the case-like tent. Now this tent, which consists of a close white satin-like tissue, is itself suspended and secured to the herbage or stalks of furze, by innumerable lines disposed in every direction, and which often prevent its simple form from being at first recognised; nor, indeed, is its form regular or universally the same; on the contrary, it varies according to situation and the disposition of the branches, stalks, and twigs amidst which it is placed.

But what is the white satin bundle, with its projecting angles, which we see hung up within this outer case or tent? It is a cocoon, containing the eggs of the spider, and over which she keeps watch and ward with unceasing vigilance. To her it is a treasure more precious than gold to the miser; she is the dragon which watches over the mysterious casket, and which she is ready to defend. Is there no wisdom displayed by the little creature in this structure, in this procedure, in this guardianship? Does she not prove herself "exceeding wise," according to her instinct? How delicate, how exquisite is the satin tissue; how fine, how labyrinthine are the multitudinous threads which bind the tenement to the brush-wood enshrouding it! The whole proclaims the skill of the weaver who wrought it "with her hands," and recalls to mind the classic fable of the contest of Arachne with Minerva.

There are other tent-making spiders, which rear up a pavilion amidst grass, under which they shelter themselves and their cocoon of eggs; but of these we have said enough in our notice of the foregoing species. Some spiders dig into the earth, and line the cavity they make with a thick, tough web, over the circular orifice of which, close to the surface of the ground, they place a door moving on hinges, so as to open and shut like the lid of a snuff-box. This lid is composed of intertwined threads, and is stout, felt-like, and compact: it is of a circular figure, and about as large as a crown piece; and its hinge, partly from the arrangement of the threads, and partly from their elasticity, acts so as to close the lid without any effort on the part of the tenant. It fits the aperture of the buried nest with the nicest accuracy. There are certain spiders which are aquatic in their habits, living in the water, preying in the water, and building their silken domicile and breeding-nest in the water. Yet the spider breathes air, though it swims and dives with singular address. These spiders, says De Geer (*Mém. des Insectes*, vii. 312), spin in the water a cell of strong, closely-woven white silk, in the form of half the shell of a pigeon's egg, or of a diving-bell, which, in a certain sense, it actually is. This is sometimes left partly above water, but often is entirely submersed. It is always attached by threads to surrounding objects, as the stems or leaves of aquatic plants, etc.; and these threads are not unfrequently of considerable length and strength, numerous and irregular. The open mouth of this silken bell is below, and its cavity is filled with air: in this the spider dwells, lays her eggs, and watches over her young brood.

* We have seen young spiders of this species, isolated by surrounding water on the floor of a room, project their lines to the ceiling, ten feet above them, and all to one point, so as to form a kind of rigging.

"On December 15th," says De Geer, "I found one of these inverted cells, in which I made a rent, so as to expel the air, upon which the spider issued forth. Though she appeared to have been laid up for three months in her winter quarters, she greedily seized upon an insect, and sucked its juices. I found, moreover, that the male as well as the female constructs a similar subaqueous cell; and during summer no less than winter."

One of these spiders was kept by a zoologist (now deceased) for several months in a glass vessel filled with water, where it built its submerged cell, and produced its eggs. We recommend this spider (*Argyrometra aquatica*) to the notice of those who are interested in the aquatic vivaria now so much in vogue, the more so as its general habits are very remarkable. It tenants, by way of preference, slow-running streams, canals, and drainage courses, and it is not uncommon even in the vicinity of London. In the water it appears, while diving, like a globule of quicksilver, the space between the body and the water being filled with a stratum of atmospheric air, with which it may be said to be encased. When it wishes for a fresh supply, or to inhale the fresh air with full freedom, it rises to the surface, and there, while the rest of the body is submersed, elevates the under part of the body on which the spinneret, or spinning apparatus, is placed, just sufficiently for the purpose of inspiration. It must be observed that a coating of fine fur covers the abdomen, and in this the pellicle of atmospheric air surrounding the body is lodged, in like manner as it is in the fine close delicate fur of the water shrew-mouse, which appears to be coated with silver as the creature pursues its subaqueous course. This stratum of air, in the case of the spider, may be useful when the insect is prevented by circumstances from rising to breathe at the surface, which it ordinarily does four or five times an hour; although, as M. Clerck assures us, it is able to continue submerged for several days together.

There is another aquatic spider, first observed in the fens of Norfolk by the Rev. Revett Shepherd, which forms a floating raft upon which it rests while on the watch for prey. This raft consists of a little ball of loose vegetable matters, held together by slight silken cords, and is about three inches in diameter; it is wafted by the breeze along the surface of the water, carrying its occupant with it, who, the moment it observes a drowning insect, darts forward over the water and instantly secures it. The successful spider then regains its raft, and devours its booty at leisure. This raft is not only an ever-shifting observatory, but it also affords the means of concealment; for when alarmed for its own personal safety, the spider cunningly retreats from the upper to the under surface, and clings there, submerged, till the danger be passed over. (Kirby and Spence's Introd.)

Leaf-rolling caterpillars are familiar to most persons; but it is not so generally known that there are leaf-rolling spiders, which, in addition to a tissue of silk, avail themselves of a leaf, which they roll up into a snug hiding-place or den, in which they lurk, expectant of the approach of any heedless fly. One of these leaf-rolling spiders (*Aranea holosericea*, Linn.) is not uncommon on

the foliage of the lilac and poplar; but it does not disdain to save itself the trouble of working, for it often dispossesses some caterpillar of its leafy habitation, perchance not without slaughtering and devouring the rightful occupant, and there seats itself in its usurped hall. The tapestry of the expelled or devoured caterpillar is, however, too poor and flimsy to suit the taste of the spider; she therefore weaves a fresh tissue, close in its texture, both for comfort and security.

There is a spider, not uncommon in woods and copses, which forms a tent by the union of several leaves drawn together, and secured by cordage; in front of this tent she hangs her net, for the purpose of entrapping her insect prey, while she herself watches from the entrance of the tent, ready to pounce upon the struggling victim, which she then drags into her place of concealment. This leafy tent serves not only as a storehouse, but also as a nursery, for here she deposits her cocoon of eggs, and here the young are hatched in the ensuing spring, after the death of the parent.

We might pursue these illustrations of the wisdom of the spider—that is, of her extraordinary instincts and modes of life—and of the nicety and skillfulness of her manipulation in the structure of her silken nets and tissues, to a much greater length; but enough has been said, and it is not imperative that we exhaust the subject or tire our reader's patience. There is one sentence of Solomon, however, which yet remains to be noticed: "She is in kings' palaces."

Allusion here is expressly made to the house-spider, whatever the species so denominated may be in the different regions of the globe. It is not only in the humble cottage that the spider weaves her web in some neglected corner; it is not only in the outhouse or the barn that she spreads her sheets of filmy silk—she taketh hold with her hands, and ascends to the lofty ceiling of the halls of the palace, and hanging out her tapestry, looks down upon the pageant below. For her as well as for the monarch was the roof adorned with moulding and carved work; for her also was the capital of the shapely column sculptured. An uninvited but an unnoticed guest, she intrudes into the presence-chamber of the mighty, and finds safety where many tremble for their life.

But time passes, war does its commissioned work, nations fail, dynasties become extinct, and palaces moulder into ruins, bearing only the traces of their former grandeur, in fragments of statuary and record-slabs, adorned with the sculptor's careful chisel. Here, amidst the ruins of what were once halls of state, or the banqueting-rooms of kings, the spider finds a home, and plies her task in the same manner and with the same industry as she did when that palace was in all its glory. A different scene is around her; but she moralizes not upon it; her aim and her object is now what it was two thousand years ago. Her wisdom is instinctive; she has nothing to learn, and nothing has she forgotten; and alike to her is the palace in its splendour and the palace in its decay. It is a satire upon man, that while he is ever changing and shifting, ever in turmoil and strife, ever rising or falling in the scale of civilization and refinement, a little creeping thing should make herself

at home and pursue her labours, throughout every mutation, unaffected by the fall of empires or the overthrow of towers and temples. After all, what is man but an insect, whose powers are limited and whose sphere of action is comprised within a narrow circle? he builds a palace and the spider tenants it.

Returning to the Scriptures, we find two other allusions to the spider—one in Job viii. 14: "Whose trust (that is, of the ungodly) shall be as a spider's web;" and the other in Isaiah lix. 5: "They (the iniquitous) weave the spider's web," "Their webs shall not become garments." (ver. 6.) There is little need for comment upon these passages; they manifestly allude to the slightness of the thread, and the flimsiness of the tissue produced by these insects, whose labours have thus attracted attention in remote antiquity. That man trusts to a spider's slender thread, whose faith is not fixed upon the rock of ages, and which does not manifest its sincerity by bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

THE ELECTRIC WIRES.

IF a sage of the last century had prophesied to our grandsires, and declared oracularly, that there were multitudes then living who should see the day when a man might seat himself comfortably in a quiet room in London, and transmit any information that he wanted to communicate to his friends in any part of the kingdom in a couple of minutes or so, and get an answer back within the half hour, what would have been thought and said of the sage? Our grandsires would have pitifully deplored the loss of the poor man's wits, and, shrugging their shoulders, have hinted at Bedlam. They would not have thought it worth while to discuss the possibility of a thing so palpably absurd, and would have felt comfortable only in dismissing it with silent contempt. But it seems the natural course of things, that the absurdities of one era should be the realities of another. All the great inventions and discoveries which have conferred so much advantage and distinction upon the existing race of mankind, have each of them had to go through the preliminary process of being scoffed and laughed at. Popular ignorance, and sometimes—for the truth must be told—scientific prejudice and theory, exact this tribute from them; and it is seldom indeed that any great discovery is allowed to assert itself as a public benefit until it has run the gauntlet of the public scorn. The electric telegraph was no exception to the rule; and most of us can remember the doubts and derisive jokes with which the astounding pretensions of its first projectors were received by those who, knowing least about the matter, were, as usual, foremost in pronouncing judgment. But what has become of these sagacious objectors now? The answer is, that some of them, to our knowledge, are daily making the electric wires the medium of their business correspondence and transactions, and would meet you with an incredulous stare, expressive of utter oblivion of the past, were you to remind them of their former ridicule and unbelief.

Passing along Lothbury the other day, and

turning up Founders' Court, we came, half un-awares, upon the identical quiet chamber of the supposititious sage of last century, in the office of the Electric and International Telegraph Company; with this marvellous difference, however, that its magic web of communication extends not only over the length and breadth of our own land, but to the major part of the civilized cities of Europe. The place presents no very remarkable spectacle, though it might puzzle a stranger unaware of its use to guess what that might be. A sort of semi-circular counter separates the public from the officials who work the various telegraphs, and who are retired from view. The counter is divided into a series of small compartments, somewhat resembling a pawnbroker's private boxes, and each affording room for one person, and furnished with pen, ink, and paper. These several compartments are occupied by gentlemen, most of whom are writing the messages they have to transmit—whether to the manufacturing districts, to the iron country, to the far north, to Ireland, or to Paris, Berlin, or Vienna; or to any part of Britain or Europe, with which it is their purpose to effect an instant communication. Others are paying the price of the operation, and withdrawing to make room for new correspondents. First come, first served, is the law of the electric wires, and when there is no box vacant, the correspondent is expected quietly to take a seat, and wait till a vacancy occurs. There is neither noise nor confusion; what voices are heard are in an under tone; and a systematic order contributes to the despatch of business.

We can, of course, know nothing of the despatches which, from this central heart of London, are flying, literally, with the speed of lightning, over land and sea, through the solid earth and the deeps of ocean, to the uttermost limits, it may be, of England or of Europe. Commerce, the grand medium of human interests, without doubt monopolises by far the largest share of the services of the electric telegraph. To one man the state of the funds in Paris at this precise moment may be a matter of vast importance; and by waiting till the next hour strikes, he will get the information he wants. Another must have an answer to a proposal for pig-iron in Scotland, before he can accept or reject a contract which is open to him, and sit down comfortably to his dinner. A third has a large demand for wheat in London, and wants the earliest advices of arrivals of American vessels in the Mersey: and so on through the whole range of possibilities, speculative and commercial. But if we could read the flying records that traverse the wires of the electric telegraph, we should assuredly find that it has its romance as well as its practical utilities—its passionate as well as its sober and phlegmatic aspect. With the interests of life, it entwines the sad realities of death; in the same moment of time, it summons one to a marriage feast, and another to the grave side; it sends the note of warning to one to flee from the haunts of men, and hide himself from the consequences of imprudence; and it invites another to the festive hearth and the embrace of loving friends. In a literal sense, it has realized the delirious demand of the poet; it *has* "annihilated time and space," and brought the distant regions

of the continent, which were formerly months apart, and thousands of miles apart in space, into instant communion on one spot. And in an astronomical sense it has done more than this—it has left “panting time” far in the rear, and outrun the sun in his course; for it has amalgamated the forenoon of Austria and the afternoon of Ireland in the noon of Founders’ Court, Lothbury! Its use as a medium for the publication of the true time is well known and familiar to the dwellers in London; and the services it is destined to render towards the perfection of our geographical knowledge, are already fully understood and appreciated, and in the course of verification by experiment. What further advantages mankind may derive from the control of the electric current, who shall say? The most accomplished electricians are as yet but coasting on the broad ocean of discovery that lies before them, and at any day and hour may light on a new region of truth richer in results than all that has yet been travelled.

It may prove interesting to our readers if, without entering upon any of the squabbles and controversies which have unfortunately characterised the history of the electric telegraph, we summarise briefly the main facts of that history.

Though the invention of the electric telegraph came upon most of us with all the features of a startling novelty, it is yet an invention of above a hundred years’ growth, and, like most great discoveries, grew into being by degrees, through the consecutive exertions and experiments of many men of genius. The first step towards it was made about the year 1746, by M. Le Monnier, in France, and Sir William Watson in England. These gentlemen electrified iron wires of great length, and their discoveries seem to have been confined to the fact that electricity passed from one end of a wire to the other, even though its length were several miles, in an instant of time; certainly they made no attempt to turn that fact to a practical account. A Scotchman residing at Renfrew, of whose name only the initials (C.M.) are known, was really the first inventor of the electric telegraph. This gentleman, in the year 1753, sent to the editor of the “Scots Magazine” a letter, headed, “An Expeditions Method of Conveying Intelligence,” setting forth the specification of an electric telegraph, so far resembling the system at present in use, as clearly to entitle him to the merit of having made the original discovery—though he seems to have had no expectation that his invention would be adopted.

In 1774, M. Lesage, of Geneva, set up an electric telegraph there, which appears to have been but a realization of the plan of the unknown Scotchman. In 1787, M. Lamond, in France, succeeded in sending telegraphic messages from one room of his house to another by means of electricity, and showed that it was capable of indefinite application that way. In 1787, M. Betancourt sent telegraphic messages along electric wires from Aranjuez to Madrid; and in 1795, Cavallo proposed to transmit signals by a modification of the same means. An improvement upon any of the above attempts was effected some twenty years later by Mr. F. Ronalds, who isolated his wires in glass tubes, and introduced a dial-plate and letters. In all these experiments, common electricity, such

as is produced by friction, was alone used. Volta discovered dynamic electricity in 1800, and to him science is indebted for the Voltaic battery. M. Sæmmering, of Munich, first applied this new power to telegraphic purposes in 1811; but his system required a separate wire for each letter of the alphabet, and though a really beautiful invention, and capable of communicating information instantaneously, was too complicated and inefficient for general purposes.

It was the grand discovery of electro-magnetism, by Professor Oersted, of Copenhagen, in 1819, which led to the most important improvements in the electric telegraph. This discovery was at once seen to be pregnant with others, which could not be long in coming; and the scientific men of England, France, Germany, and America emulated each other in working the mine to which their views had been directed by the philosophic Dane. Our space will not permit us to catalogue the several services rendered by the chief men of note in either country. The names of Schweigger, Ampere, Arago, Faraday, Sturgeon, and others, are indissolubly connected with the progress of electrical knowledge and its practical application: it was by the successful studies of such men that the secrets of nature were evolved which formed the basis of subsequent proceedings, and it is to them chiefly that the world is indebted for the final success that has been achieved.

Gauss and Weber, of Gottingen, were the first who applied the electric telegraph to purposes of actual usefulness. They made their signals by the movements of an oscillating magnetic needle, observed through a telescope, and had their apparatus in use so early as 1833. The invention of the modern telegraph, however, and the merit of applying it on a grand scale, is allowed on all hands to be due to Professor Morse, of the United States. He made known his plan so early as 1832, and subsequently obtained a grant from Congress for the construction of a line forty miles in length, between Baltimore and Washington. The success was so great that longer lines were immediately projected and commenced, and an enormous system of internal communication sprung up, which has gone on increasing at such a rate that as many as ten thousand miles of communication have been established in a single year! In America, the despatches are all conveyed by a single wire, and are all written or printed, either in letters or in cipher. The telegraph companies are totally independent of the railways, and for thousands of miles, through prairies, forests, and morasses, their single wires traverse the boundless waste. When the whole of the lines in course of construction are completed, and a wire has been sunk between Newfoundland and Ireland, the Londoner may reckon on participating the news of the day with the Californian digger.

For the introduction of the electric telegraph into England, the public are mainly indebted to Mr. William Fothergill Cooke; he was at first associated with Professor Wheatstone, whose profound scientific researches and influence with the public no doubt contributed to popularise the plan as well as to promote its execution. The differences which subsequently arose between those two gentlemen are matters with which we have nothing

to do; each, it appears, claimed the invention of the electric telegraph; and they mutually agreed to submit their respective claims to the award of arbitrators, of whom Mr. Brunell, the celebrated engineer, was one. The arbitrators decided that Mr. Cooke is entitled to stand alone as the inventor—awarding to the professor the merit of having materially assisted in the rapid progress of the scheme.

Although England was many years behind America in reaping the advantage of the electric telegraph, any one who now takes up the telegraphic map of Britain, and marks how the whole surface of the land is reticulated with electric wires, will see that there is little left to wish for in this respect, so far, at least, as the interests of commerce are concerned. Previous to 1845 there were but comparatively few lines completed; yet the public had by that time learned their value, and were fully prepared and longing for a complete system of communication. In 1846, Mr. Cooke succeeded in establishing the Electric Telegraph Company, of which he is a director, which company has covered England and Scotland with nearly six thousand miles of telegraphic communication on railway lines, employing near 25,000 miles of wire, exclusive of that used by railways for their own purposes. The office in Founders' Court, Lothbury, is the central station of the Company, and from thence above two hundred wires proceed to seventeen branch stations in London and its vicinity. Further, from the House of Parliament a wire runs to the station in St. James's Street, close to the West End Club, by means of which, when the House is sitting, an abstract of the proceedings is forwarded every half hour, and circulated in the Italian Opera and all the principal clubs. By this means a member of the House, absent at his club, or the opera, knows when his presence is wanted for a division, and hastens down accordingly.

The average number of messages despatched monthly by the Electric Telegraph Company amounts to little short of sixty thousand, and the average time occupied in the transmission of each does not exceed one minute. The staff employed for the transaction of so large a business, including those engaged in London and the provinces, comprises more than twelve hundred persons—nearly a thousand of them being clerks and messengers. In addition to the male clerks there are four-score females, and there are a hundred and thirty-nine engineers. For the accommodation of the clerks and messengers attached to the central station at Lothbury, the company have established a lodging-house under their own supervision, where the health and comfort of their servants are properly cared for.

The original promoters of the electric telegraph, whatever they may have expected from the success of their projects, never anticipated that its wires would traverse the sea, and thus connect Great Britain with the continent, or whole continents together. This idea was an after-thought almost as bold and original in conception as the first design. Dr. Shaughnessy, in India, was the first who succeeded in transmitting a message through the water. His experiment was made in the river Hoogly, and succeeded. This was in

1839; but it was not till 1847 that the attempt was successful in Europe. In that year M. Siemens first applied gutta percha to the insulation of the wires, and laid down a telegraphic line across the Rhine at Cologne. Gutta percha, the use of which a dozen years ago was all but unknown in Britain, came in good time to render a service which no other material could perform. The success of experiments made with it led to the formation of a Submarine Telegraph Company, who, in October, 1851, laid down a line between Calais and Dover, by means of which, from that time to this, England and France have exchanged despatches at their will, and London gets news from Paris, and *vice versa*, in twenty minutes. On the fourth of June, 1852, a line sixty-four miles long was laid down by the private enterprise of Messrs. Newall and Co. across the Irish Channel from Holyhead to Dublin. The Submarine Telegraph Company next laid down a gigantic cable from Dover to Ostend, a distance of seventy miles. The Magnetic Telegraph Company and the British Telegraph Company have also laid down cables of the same kind from Portpatrick to Donaghadee: the first-named of these companies has above two thousand miles of lines in active operation, employing over thirteen thousand miles of wire. Another company, called the European and Electric Telegraph Company, has been established to act in common with the two submarine companies, and connect them with the metropolis and the large commercial towns. The crowning exploit, as yet, in submarine communication, has been the laying down of the line from Varna to Balaklava, a distance of three hundred miles, by which our government during the late war was enabled to receive despatches from the Crimea. That we shall ere long span the Atlantic with the electric wire, there is really no reasonable cause to doubt (the preliminary steps have in fact been taken); and to the minds of thoughtful men, it is becoming clear that the means are already prepared and in our hands for girdling the whole earth in the bands of social communion, and that all that is wanting to this glorious consummation is the brotherly consent and co-operation of the whole human family.

JOHN TRYER, THE SELF-HELPER.

A STORY FOR BOYS, FROM THE GERMAN.

In a great commercial city of Germany there lived a worthy, substantial gentleman. His wife was an excellent and kind woman; and both of them took a deep interest in the right education of their numerous children, who repaid their parental care with warm affection and gratitude.

The motto of this honest family was, "Pray and work," and they found their best happiness in the fulfilment of this precept. After the toils of the day were over, the children delighted to hear from their parents some pretty stories, that might make them wiser, better, and happier. Among these evening amusements, the good father told them the following story of John Tryer, in order to teach them the benefits of *self-help*, or personal industry.

As the adventures of John Tryer greatly de-

lighted the young folks to whom they were narrated, we hope that they will be useful and entertaining to many of our young readers also.

CHAPTER I.

Once on a time, in the city of Hamburg, there was a certain merchant named Nicholas Tryer. He had an amiable wife and three sons. The eldest son took a fancy to the profession of a soldier, enlisted in the army, and was shot in a battle against the French. The second died young; and the third, whose name was John, is the hero of the present narrative. John being the youngest son, was his parents' favourite, and was indulged to a foolish excess. Instead of keeping him steadily at work, and training him in habits of useful, practical industry, they allowed him to follow his fancy in everything.

John Tryer, therefore, wasted the years of boyhood in idle amusements, till it was difficult to turn him to any good account. When his father at last suggested that he should learn some useful trade, he said he would rather travel into the wide world, that he might hear and see new things. This was an absurd wish for such a lad as John. Had he previously cultivated his mind by study and perseverance, he might have had some right to travel. Those who have improved themselves at home may be expected to improve by travelling abroad. But the idleness or ignorance which makes people unserviceable in their own country, cannot enable them to travel in foreign regions with profit. Those who would make their fortunes in strange lands, must first acquire many valuable accomplishments.

John was now seventeen years old. He continually tormented his father to let him travel; but his father would not listen to his absurd request, while his mother earnestly advised him thus: "Son, remain in your native country, and support yourself honestly."

One day, when John was wandering about the port, according to his usual custom, he met one of his companions, who was the son of a captain, and who was just about to sail for London with his father.

"Will you come with me?" said the youth.

"Very gladly," replied Tryer; "but my parents will not allow it."

Much trouble would John have avoided had he only attended to this whisper of conscience.

"Oh," said the other, "you may as well embark with me, if it is only for the fun of the thing. In three weeks we return to Hamburg, and then you can tell your parents how you have spent the time."

"But I have no money," said John.

"No matter, I can manage that; the treat shall cost you nothing."

After a few moments' consideration, John seized his friend's hand, exclaiming, "Done! I will go with you: only let me get on board immediately."

The two friends soon went on board, the sailors drew up the anchors and spread sail. The wind was favourable, and the captain gave six shots as a farewell to the city. John stood on deck, overjoyed that he was at last beginning to travel, and forgetful of the distress he would occasion at home by his wilful conduct.

With the wind in their favour, they soon lost sight of the town of Hamburg. The day following they reached Ritzebüttel, where the Elbe empties itself into the sea, and now they were upon the ocean! Young Tryer looked quite bewildered at seeing nothing but sky and water. The last object visible was the Lighthouse upon the island of Heligoland, or Holy Land.

During two days they had fine weather and fair wind; but on the third day the sky was overcast with clouds, which grew darker and darker. Violent gusts of wind came on, and not long after a tremendous thunderstorm arose. The lightning seemed to stream from every quarter of the sky into the gloomy deep. Rain poured down in torrents, and a mighty tempest so agitated the sea, that the swelling waves seemed almost as high as houses. The vessel rocked to and fro—now raised upwards by an enormous wave, now buried in the deep abyss, now thrown on one side, now on the other. There was a noise among the rigging; there was a rumbling in the ship; the people were obliged to hold each other that they might not fall. John was not accustomed to the sea, and became so giddy and sick that he thought he was going to die.

"Oh! my parents, my poor parents!" he cried many times, "they will never see me again. How cruel that I could have so afflicted them!"

Crash, crash! something fell suddenly on the deck.

"Heaven be merciful to us!" cried the crew, pale with terror, and wringing their hands in despair.

"What is it?" asked John, dreadfully alarmed.

"Oh! we are lost; a squall has broken the foremast, and the main-mast will soon give way."

"We are lost!" cried another voice from below; "the ship has sprung a leak, and the water is already four feet high in the ship."

John, who was on the cabin floor, sank down at these words in a swoon. The rest ran to the pumps, to try and keep the vessel afloat, if possible. At last a sailor came and shook John, asking if he wanted to lie there idle, while everybody was working himself to death? Upon this he arose and went to one of the pumps. The captain then ordered guns to be fired, as signals of distress, should any vessels be within hearing. John, not knowing what these meant, supposed the ship was blowing up, and fell down in another swoon; but there was no one to regard him, and a sailor pushed him aside, as if he were dead, and stepped into his place.

They continued to pump with all their might; but the water still rose, and they expected every moment the ship would sink. In order to lighten it, everything that could be spared—guns, casks, etc.—were thrown overboard. But all would not avail. In the mean time, however, the guns of distress were heard by another vessel, which sent off a boat to save the people, if possible. The sea ran so high, and the tempest was so furious, that the boat was in great danger of being swallowed up; but the humane sailors preferred to risk their lives, rather than abandon their fellow men in distress.

At length they reached near enough to the stern of a Dutch vessel to catch a rope which

was thrown out to them, by means of which they were pulled up, and the distressed crew sprang in to save themselves. John Tryer, who could not stand, was thrown in by some compassionate sailor. When they had rowed a short distance from their vessel, it sank. Happily the storm had begun to abate, otherwise the boat, now so heavily loaded, must have been lost in the waves; but amidst many dangers it reached the friendly vessel, and all were received therein. It was bound for London, and after some days entered the mouth of the Thames, and soon cast anchor near London, all rejoicing in this merciful preservation.

John had now enough to do to see the great city of London, and soon forgot both past and future, till his appetite reminded him that he needed food. He therefore returned to the captain, and requested to be allowed to board with him. He was hospitably received. During the meal, the captain asked John the reason for his coming to London, and what he intended to do. John told him frankly that he had made the voyage merely for pleasure, without his parents' knowledge, and that he knew not what to do.

"Without the knowledge of your parents!" cried the captain, quite shocked, and dropping the knife from his hand. "Why did I not know this before? Thoughtless young man! had I known this at Hamburg, I would not have brought you away, even had you offered me a ton of gold as a reward."

John looked down much ashamed. The honest captain continued to point out his great fault, and told him he might be sure it would not prosper with him till he repented and asked his parents' forgiveness. The youth shed bitter tears. "But what shall I do now?" he asked.

"What shall you do?" replied the captain. "Ask God to forgive you; then return to your parents, fall at their feet, and with filial penitence pray them to pardon your thoughtlessness." The captain did what every one should do, when he sees his fellow man go astray—he reminded John of his duty.

"Will you take me back again to Hamburg?"

"I?" said the captain; "have you forgotten that my ship is lost? I cannot return till I am able to get another vessel, and that may be a much longer time than you need stay here. You ought to take the first good ship that sails for Hamburg, and the sooner the better."

"But I have no money."

"Here are three guineas which I will lend you, though I have much need of my small stock of money now. Go with them to the harbour, and take your passage. If your repentance is sincere, God will grant you a happier voyage back than ours hither was." So saying, he shook John's hand cordially, and they parted.

On his way to the docks, various thoughts passed through John's mind. "What will my parents say when I return? They will certainly be offended by what I have done. And my comrades and other people will laugh at me for coming back so quickly, and seeing nothing but a few streets in London," thought he. Again John was tampering with his conscience. He ought to have yielded to duty at once.

He paused thoughtfully: it occurred to him not

to return immediately; then he thought of what the captain had said, that it could not prosper with him till he returned to his parents. For a long time he could not make up his mind, but at last he went to the harbour. He was, however, glad to find that no vessel was ready to sail for Hamburg. The man who gave him this information was a trader to the coast of Africa. He was pleased with John's looks, and invited him on board to take tea in his cabin. John accepted the invitation. He had learnt to speak a little English in Hamburg, and now he was in England he found the advantage of it. When the captain heard that John had such a desire to travel, and that he disliked returning to Hamburg, he proposed that he should sail with him as cabin boy to Guinea. John was at first startled at the idea. But when he was assured that the voyage would be very pleasant, and that for the sake of his company and services the captain would take him free, and that he might perhaps have the opportunity of gaining something considerable by the voyage, he was so overcome with the desire to travel that he forgot what the good Hamburg captain had advised him, and what he himself had resolved upon. Ah! thoughtless, unkind boy, thus to trifle with kind parents' love.

After a few moments' thought, he said: "I have only three guineas; what can I buy with so small a sum, to trade with in the place to which you are going?"

"Many things," said the captain; "toys of all kinds; glass beads, knives, scissors, hatchets, ribbons, and such like. The blacks in Africa take great delight in these, and will give a hundred times as much as they are worth in gold and other things."

John could no longer restrain himself. He selfishly forgot parents, friends, and country, and joyfully exclaimed, "I will go with you, captain."

"Agreed," said the other; and they shook hands, and resolved upon the voyage. John then hastened with his guineas into the city to purchase what the captain had recommended, and convey his things on board. After some days a favourable wind allowed the anchors to be weighed, and they set sail.

MOTHERS.

NEARLY twenty times does the sacred historian of the book of Kings hand down the names of mothers, with the record of the good or evil deeds of their sons. Thus: "Josiah reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jedidah; and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." Or, "His (Abijah's) mother's name was Maachah; and he walked in all the sins of his father." See, also, 1 Kings xi. 26, xv. 2, xxii. 42; 2 Kings viii. 26, xii. 1. We are not usually told what was the character of these mothers, nor how far it was due to their influence that their sons did good or evil; but surely the introduction of their names, in immediate connexion with the good or evil, is sufficiently significant. "His mother's name was Jedidah; and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." One almost feels as if further information about her were superfluous. "Blessed are those among women," is the thought at once suggested by the words.

On the other hand, what memorable notoriety is given to Maachah! She may have been a good woman herself; yet, what volumes are in that handing of her name—only her name—down to posterity along with the misdeeds of her son! And it seems as if the father's bad example might have been more than counteracted, had she but duly exerted her maternal influence; for "his mother's name was Maachah; and he walked in all the sins of his father!" Christian mothers! watch well your every-day life among your little ones. Think of this being said of a lost soul—"Yes, he did evil all his life; he lived as he was taught at home; and his mother's name was —!"